

REMARKS

The examiner is thanked for the performance of a thorough search. By this amendment, Claims 13-17 are canceled, and new Claims 21-27 are added. Hence, Claims 1-12 and 18-27 are pending in the application.

The amendments to the claims as indicated herein do not add any new matter to this application. Furthermore, amendments made to the claims as indicated herein have been made to exclusively improve readability and clarity of the claims and not for the purpose of overcoming alleged prior art.

The Office Action required an election among sets of claims identified as Group I and Group II. New Claims 21-27 generally correspond in scope to original Claims 2-8. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 21-27 are properly classified in Group I. Applicant elects for prosecution Group I, comprising Claims 1-12 and Claims 18-27, without traverse.

The Applicant's undersigned representative, Christopher J. Palermo, and Examiner Jacob Lipman spoke by telephone on June 15, 2005 and the Examiner verbally made the same restriction requirement and requested election. Mr. Palermo verbally made the same election herein. Applicant understands that some form of disruption in the USPTO electronic workflow system required repetition of the verbal restriction requirement and verbal election in writing, leading to the present Office Action.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone relating to any issue that would advance examination of the present application.

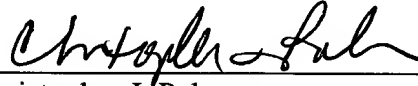
A petition for extension of time, to the extent necessary to make this reply timely filed, is hereby made. If applicable, a law firm check for the petition for extension of time fee is enclosed herewith. If any applicable fee is missing or insufficient, throughout the pendency of this

application, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to any applicable fees and to credit any overpayments to our Deposit Account No. 50-1302.

Respectfully submitted,

HICKMAN PALERMO TRUONG & BECKER LLP

Dated: October 21, 2005



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